

**REMARKS**

The Office action mailed May 6, 2010, has been reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Applicants herein amend claims 1, 9, 11, 12, 25 and 35 and add claims 36 and 37. No new matter is introduced.

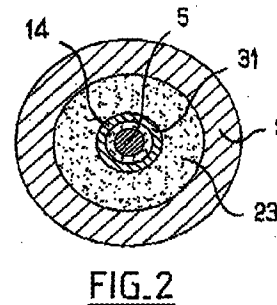
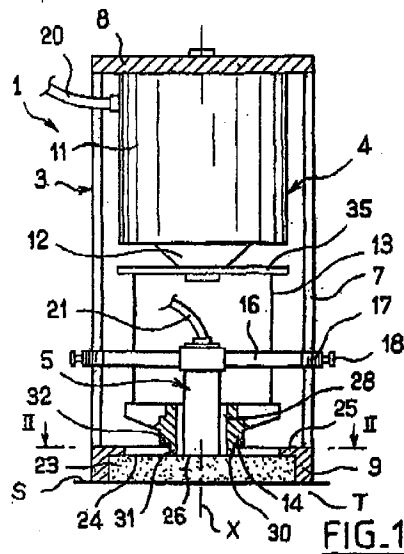
**Interview Summary**

The undersigned wishes to thank Examiner Cwern for his time and for the courtesy extended during the telephonic interview conducted on September 20, 2010. During said interview, the herein amendment to claim 1 was discussed, together with support in the application for same. Examiner Cwern indicated that said support and the herein amendment to claim 1 appear to resolve the pending rejection, but requested that this amendment include remarks explaining the support for claim 1 as discussed during the interview.

**Pending Rejection**

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-23, and 25-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Applicants herein amend claim 1 to recite that “the ultrasound probe extends through the central bore along an X axis such that the probe surface contacts the coupling member and such that at least a portion of X axis displacements of the vibrator are not transmitted to the ultrasound probe.” Applicants have made minor amendments to claims 9, 11 and 12 to conform to claim 1, and have also amended claims 25 and 35 in a manner similar to claim 1.

Enabling support for the claims can be found Applicants’ Figures 1 and 2 and in the corresponding description. For convenience, Figures 1 and 2 are reproduced below:



As explained by Applicants' specification, vibrator 4 includes a core 12 coupled to an annular piece 14. Para. 0073.<sup>1</sup> Annular piece 14 defines a relatively narrow contact surface 30 that is in contact with coupling member 23. Para. 0079. An ultrasound probe 5 passes through a central bore of annular piece 14 and has a surface 26 that also contacts coupling member 23. Para. 0078.

As explained in paragraph 0076 of Applicant's specification, coupling member 23 in some embodiments may be in the form of a gel of gelatine. As can be appreciated by persons of ordinary skill in the art, the viscoelastic nature of member 23 in such embodiments would serve to dampen transfer of X axis movements from annular piece 14 (coupled to vibrator 4) to ultrasound probe 5.

Applicants' specification at paragraph 0099 describes an additional way in which X axis movements of vibrator 4 can be decoupled from probe 5. For convenience, paragraph 0099 is reproduced below with italics added.

It is possible, in particular, to apply various modifications to the apparatus described above, in particular to the measurement acquisition part designed to be applied on the skin. In particular, the *coupling member 26 can, for example, be made in another shape, and in particular of a material other than gelatine, thereby making it possible, where necessary, to make cut-outs or recesses in the*

<sup>1</sup> For convenience, citations to Applicants' specification refer to paragraph numbers of Pub. No. 2004/0225215.

*coupling member, said cut-outs or recesses being designed to improve mechanical decoupling between the ultrasound probe and the vibrator,* and/or to improve the waveform of the waves emitted to the skin.

As would be appreciated by a person of ordinary skill in the art, the italicized portion of paragraph 0099 describes embodiments in which cut-outs or recesses in the coupling member are used to decouple the portion of the coupling member associated with annular piece 14 from the portion associated with probe 5.

Applicants have added claims 36 and 27 in order to more fully claim their invention. Claims 36 and 37 respectively depend from claim 1 and 25, and are supported by the above-discussed portions of the specification and drawings.

All rejections having been addressed, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance and request early notification of same.

Respectfully submitted,

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